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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EH _____ GRAY

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS JUN 6 1941 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FROM Ankara

Dated June 3, 1941

Rec'd 9 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE JUN 1941 DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

176, June 3, 10 a.m.

The following translation from an editorial in the Istanbul AKSAM of May 31st is believed to be an accurate exposition of Turkey's foreign policy. There is reason to believe that it was approved by if not actually written in the Foreign Office:

"The present policy is the same policy which we have been following since the beginning of the war: we are faithful to our alliances with Great Britain and we shall never forsake. We are outside the war; this attitude is not contrary to our alliance, it corresponds to the interests of the two parties. We entertain no aggresive designs against any one. We are ready to defend ourselves. This attitude is not an obstacle to the establishment of normal frank relations with those who wish to keep on friendly terms with us. We are devoted to peace but not to the point of consenting to our surrender. We have no fear of war but we do not want to attack anyone. That is all.

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FILED JUN 9 1941

Corrected 2/10/42 AEH

767.00/101

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767.00

EH -2- 176, June 3, 10 a.m. from Ankara.

I sum up in two words: neither the spirit of adventure which prevailed before the last universal war nor the spirit of surrender, the defeatist spirit which prevailed at Istanbul during the period of the armistice.

We advise our friends to be attentive and calm".

MACMURRAY

EMB

767.00

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE--

SUBJECT

Encloses copy of letter from J.V.A. MacMurray, Ambassador to Turkey, regarding his outlook on Turkish situation.

767.00/103 1/2

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Letter
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated June 26, 1941 ~~From~~ To President

File No. 740.0011 EW 1939/12545½

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

Confidential File

767.00/103½

767.00/

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Statement on foreign affairs made by the Prime Minister yesterday on the occasion of the eleventh anniversary of founding of Peoples Houses by Peoples Republica Party:

Quotes text of -.

767.00/104

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Telegram #333
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Feb. 22, 1943 From/To Turkey (Ankara) (Steinhardt)

File No. 740.0011 EUROPEAN WAR 1939 /28106

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

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104

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN EMBASSY
London, September 1, 1943.

No. 10944.

Subject: London Times Article on Turkish Policy.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit a copy of a special article entitled "Turkey and the War", published in the London Times of August 31, 1943, regarding the national policy of Turkey and contributed by the Times' correspondent in Turkey.

The correspondent expresses the opinion that in Turkey there is anxiety that Turkish views should be explained to and understood by the British public for two reasons - first, because Britain is the only country to which Turkey is bound by ties of alliance, and secondly, because Britain is the only country among the Allied nations which chose of her own free will to fight the Axis without waiting to be attacked, and therefore the only one having the right to question the present Turkish attitude.

In his discussion the correspondent takes a consistent view of Turkish policy and points out that, in Turkish opinion, whether Turkey enters the war on the side of the Allies or whether she concedes facilities to the Allies, Turkey would naturally cease to be neutral and would be considered and treated by Germany as an enemy. Among the reasons which he gives against any change of policy is that, after four years of neutrality, it would be difficult to persuade the Turkish people to join the war now without being attacked since they know that their government fosters no territorial ambitions, and that Turkish participation in the war at this stage would look like a "stab in the back" against their former ally in the last war.

The correspondent admits that it is hazardous to indulge in any prognostications, but says that in the event of a collapse of the Axis structure in the Balkans, most probably followed by anarchy and chaos, many Turks hope the Turkish army may play a prominent part in contributing toward the maintenance of order in the peninsula.

In conclusion, the correspondent expresses the view that when the Grand National Assembly opens on November 1 in Ankara, the Turkish President may use the opportunity to define Turkish policy in some precise, authoritative manner.

Respectfully yours,
For the Ambassador:

W. J. Gallman
First Secretary of Embassy

Enclosure:
(In triplicate) Copy
of Times article cited.

CGI:LZ

Copies sent to DCA

SEP 17 1943

SEP 20 1943 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SEP 20 1943 DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

SEP 11 1943 DEPARTMENT OF STATE COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE INFORMATION SERVICE Department of State

DIVISION OF POLITICAL STUDIES OCT 15 1943 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

767.00/105

PS/MEL

...ure No. 1 to despatch No. 1094 of Sept. 1/43,
...Embassy of London, England.
PAPER: THE TIMES NUMBER:
CITY: LONDON DATE: AUG 31 1943

TURKEY AND THE WAR

A CONSISTENT VIEW OF NATIONAL POLICY

EYES TURNED TOWARDS THE BALKANS

From Our Correspondent in Turkey

The Turkish attitude towards the war has been much discussed here lately and Turkish political writers have struck different notes, some putting the accent on Turkish neutrality while others have dwelt on Turkish obligations arising from the Anglo-Turkish alliance.

No comprehensive view can be formed on the present state of Anglo-Turkish relations unless it is borne in mind that at the time when Britain, France and Turkey signed the Tripartite Declaration of May 12, 1939, which was converted into the Treaty of Alliance of October 19, 1939, none of the three signatories had more than a vague conception of the technique and requirements of modern warfare ; all three of them were still under the influence of tactics used during the last war and were more or less imbued with the Maginot complex. The collapse of Poland and later of France opened their eyes to grim realities. Britain acquiesced in a tacit understanding whereby Turkey, although abiding by her treaty obligations, should not be pressed to execute them, on account of Britain's inability, at that time, to supply her with weapons required for putting the Turkish army on a war footing as stipulated by the Treaty of Alliance. That situation continued till the autumn of 1942, it being admitted that Turkish neutrality, assured by the Turkish-German pact signed on June 18, 1941, was useful to Britain, and subsequently to Russia, as covering from German attack the British positions in the Middle East and even the Caucasus from the south.

HITLER'S MISCALCULATION

It was suspected then, and it is definitely known now, that in the spring of 1941 Italy had pressed Germany to pass through Turkey and attack Britain in the Middle East, but that the Germans had preferred to postpone this operation till after the removal of the Russian danger, which they hoped to effect within a few weeks. Hitler's miscalculation resulted in El Alamein and Stalingrad, which altered the situation completely. Turkish neutrality, which till then was favourable to the allies, began to be profitable to the Axis. Moreover, it was feared that Germany, frustrated in Africa and Russia, might try to retrieve her lost prestige by launching a brusque attack on some weaker spot, and Turkey was considered to be a possible target. Mr. Churchill's journey to Adana, the supply of war material in large quantities to Turkey consequent upon the Adana meeting, and the subsequent visit to Ankara of British army, navy, and air commanders were all part of an effort to meet the new situation created by the allied victories in Libya and Russia. The Germans were much perturbed by the new impetus given to the Anglo-Turkish Alliance, and last April they made representations to the subject, but it is comparatively easy to form an opinion of what Turkish reaction to the above questions might be. It could be summarized under the following heads: —

First, thanks to the allies' ungrudging assistance in war material and supplies, Turkey's national defence is to-day very efficient for defensive purposes, but could not be considered adequate for an offensive war. Secondly, the Axis forces are at present very close to the Turkish frontiers from the Aegean Islands to the Bulgarian border, and they would therefore be able to attack Turkey and certainly to destroy by bombing some of her more vulnerable towns, like Istanbul, before the allies could move their forces to Turkish assistance, handicapped as they are by inadequate land transport facilities and by the Axis possession of Crete and the Dodecanese, with the result that Germany would be provided with a success she so sorely needs for home consumption. Thirdly, after four years of neutrality it would be difficult to persuade the Turkish people to join the war now without being attacked, and knowing as they do that their Government fosters no ambitions for territorial acquisitions. Fourthly, as everybody in Turkey is aware that Germany is beaten, Turkish participation in the war at this stage would look like a "stab in the back" similar to that which Italy dealt France, an act loathsome to the Turks, especially if perpetrated against their former ally in the last war.

These are, frankly stated, the ideas prevalent in Turkish minds at the present moment, and one notices great anxiety that Turkish views should be explained to, and understood by, the British public for two reasons: first, because Britain is the only country to which Turkey is bound by ties of alliance, and therefore entitled to know what her ally's attitude is at this crucial stage of the war; and, secondly, because, Britain being the only country among the allied nations which chose of her own free will to fight the dictators without waiting to be attacked by them, she is the only one having the right to question the present Turkish attitude.

HUMANITARIAN DUTIES

What, then, is the conclusion of this survey of Turkish policy. In shaping that policy during four years of war the Turkish Government's primary concern was naturally to safeguard Turkish interests and assure the welfare of the Turkish people. Besides that, so to speak, selfish object, they endeavoured to fulfil as far as possible their humanitarian duties, as in the case of the exchanges of prisoners, the dispatch of food relief to Greece, and so on. One further step would be for Turkey to make her contribution towards the new and better world which the leaders of the United Nations are striving to create.

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The position remains the same to-day, but several questions are hovering in every mind, questions which might be condensed in these terms. In view of the changed and ever-changing war situation, has the time come when Turkey may be called upon to fulfil her treaty obligations towards Britain, and, if so, how? Is Turkey in a position to fulfil those obligations, and, in the affirmative, would Turkish cooperation be of substantial assistance to the allies? Before any attempt is made to reply to these questions it should be pointed out that, in Turkish opinion, whether this country enters the war on the allies' side, or whether she simply concedes to them facilities such as the passage of allied troops through Turkish territory, or the use of Turkish airfields by allied aircraft, the result would be the same. Turkey would cease to be neutral and would be considered and treated by Germany as an enemy.

Turkish official quarters naturally maintain great reserve on this delicate to, and understood by, the British public for two reasons: first, because Britain is the only country to which Turkey is bound by ties of alliance, and therefore entitled to know what her ally's attitude is at this crucial stage of the war; and, secondly, because, Britain being the only country among the allied nations which chose of her own free will to fight the dictators without waiting to be attacked by them, she is the only one having the right to question the present Turkish attitude.

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It is, of course, most hazardous to indulge in any prognostications, but it is conceivable that military operations, and a consequent political evolution in South-eastern Europe may take such a turn as to bring about the sudden collapse of the "Axis" structure in the Balkans. In that case the 15 or 16 German divisions now garrisoned in the Balkans may prove quite inadequate to cope with the situation; and in fact the Germans may decide to withdraw beyond the Danube if the situation becomes too critical for them. When this eventually takes place a state of anarchy and chaos will threaten to prevail in the Balkans, with internecine political passions and national hatreds let loose. Many Turks hope that a well-disciplined force like the Turkish army may play a prominent and useful part in contributing to maintain order in the peninsula and to avert a general violent upheaval until the return of more normal conditions.

In any case, when the summer season is over and political activity returns to Ankara, developments may be expected to take a more positive shape; and when President Inönü opens the session of the Grand National Assembly with his annual speech on November 1 he may use the opportunity to define Turkish policy in some precise and authoritative manner.

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 1094 of Sept. 1/43
from the Embassy at London, England.
PAPER: THE TIMES NUMBER:
CITY: LONDON DATE: AUG 31 1943

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767.00

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Turkish neutrality

Submits comments on an article by Vasiliev concerning -.

767.00 / 106

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel.# 1295 10am
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Sept 8, 1943 From / To USSR(Moscow) (Standley)

File No. 740.00111 European War 1939/717

PS/HWL 1/96

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 11 1944
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DIVISION OF WORLD TRADE INTELLIGENCE
SEP 19 1944
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
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AUG 10 1944
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

767.00/7-2344

767.00/8-3144

AIRGRAM

FROM

STOCKHOLM

Dated July 31, 1944

Rec'd. August 10, 8 am

Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

DIVISION OF
TERRITORIAL STUDIES
File
AUG 25 1944
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Confidential

A-694, July 31,

Ziya Tepedelen, Second Secretary of the Turkish Legation in Stockholm, speaking confidentially to a Foreign Service Officer of this Legation, gave the following comments concerning Turkey's present foreign policy:

note
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740.0011 E.W

Turkey, Tepedelen thought, would not go to war with Germany and for the following reasons:

1) The Turkish people could not be persuaded that this was a war for Turkish freedom and independence and hence would be psychologically unprepared for the sacrifices the war would involve.

2) Despite the growing weakness of Germany there were sufficient German divisions in Bulgaria to make it difficult for the Turks to hold Turkish Europe because of the difficulty of supplying Turkish armies across the straits and limited elbow room provided by Turkey in Europe for manoeuvring troops. Also the British either could not or would not provide sufficient motorized equipment and planes.

3) The defeat of Germany meant that the Balkans would come under Russian influence and there might well be created a Slavic bloc comprising Bulgaria and Yugoslavia with Rumania either swallowed up or of insignificant importance. Turkish policy sought to avoid any single

great power having domination in the Balkans. Hence, though Turkey could and would do nothing to prevent the disappearance of German influence in this area, she could hardly be asked to fight enthusiastically for the erection of a strong Slavic amalgam there and possibly a second land front with Russia.

4) If Turkey fought the Turks of under 40 years of age would do most of the dying. These are the ones on whom the land depends to carry on the Ataturk cultural and economic revolution and to prevent any reversion to ancient Turkish or Islamic culture.

5) Turkey has no territorial or other demands with anybody worth fighting about.

6) Turkey as guardian of the straits depends on rivalry between Great Britain and Russia as her best security. Great Britain needs Turkey as a barrier to Russian entrance into the Mediterranean and possible encroachment on British Near Eastern interests, including oil fields. Hence, Turkey is assured of British support. Russian friendship is the most important matter at the moment to Turkey but it is by no means certain that Russia really wants Turkey to attack the Slavic state of Bulgaria.

7) Air bases in Turkey would be given to the Allies if it would not call down a German war declaration. It might mean just that, however, if the use of the bases were of real military damage to German interests. Now that the Russian front is so near the Balkans Turkey is no longer so necessary as an air base as it formerly was.

8) Finally Tepedelen said that he served as private secretary to Menemendjoglu (spelling uncertain) for over a year before coming to Stockholm a few months ago and that in this period Tepedelen was unaware of any Russian demand, formal or confidential, that Turkey should enter the war against Germany.

In brief, Tepedelen thought that the Turks would break off relations with Germany and avoid a declaration of war.

JOHNSON

GK:ca.
2 copies to American Embassy, London

767.00/9-1244

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT

Turkish Foreign Policy:

Outlines conversation with Turkish Prime Minister regarding-.

767.00/9-1244

Confidential file

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel.#1717,10pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Sept.12,1944 From Turkey(Ankara)

File No. 740.0011 E.W./9-1244

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

Central File: Decimal File 767.00, Political Relations Of States, Relations; Bi-Lateral Treaties., Turkey And The World, June 3, 1941 - Sept.12, 1944. June 3, 1941 - September 12, 1944. MS Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944: Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations of Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States, 1940-1944. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5111395343%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 23 June 2025.